

NRO-1

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, National Reconnaissance Office
SUBJECT: NRO Aircraft Operations
REFERENCE:

- (a) NRO Memorandum, 15 April 1963, Operations Aspects of the NRO
- (b) NRO Memorandum, 22 April 1963, NRO Aircraft Operations

1. Reference (a) which outlined a proposal for the establishment of a National Reconnaissance Office Aircraft Operations Center, and Reference (b) which amplified the original proposal with relation to CIA operations, have been reviewed. While the amplification does clarify and satisfactorily explain the position of CIA in this organization, I believe that the basic proposal is cumbersome and involves certain fundamental management weaknesses.

2. In the first place the proposal calls for the present JRC to serve in a dual capacity and as such serve two chiefs, the JCS and the DNRO. This type of dual responsibility is always confusing and in operational situations command lines must be absolutely clear cut. The Chairman of the JRC would be placed in an almost impossible position in such situations when the JCS and DNRO were not in complete agreement.

3. I believe that the desirable objective of providing the NRO with some means of exercising its authority over all overflight activities can be achieved in a simpler fashion without confusing the command lines. I believe this can be accomplished by establishing a Program E which would include all aircraft overflights under the control of the military establishment in the same manner as Program B includes all the overflights assigned responsibility to CIA. This

NRO review(s)
completed.

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Program E would be the responsibility of the JCS and the Chairman of the JRC could be the Director of Program E in the same way that the DD/R is the Director of Program B.

4. The Director of Program E would then be charged with presenting plans for all overflights assigned to its responsibility to the DNRO for approval and submission to higher authority as required. Another function of the Director of Program E would be to maintain an information center for the NRO on all aircraft operations. The NRO could then have a small staff for monitoring and processing when necessary all overflight plans whether they were to be conducted by the DOD or CIA. As a result of its reviews this staff would then be in a position to provide advice to the DNRO leading to any action which he might be required to take in this area.

5. Coordination at an operational level between CIA and the JCS would continue as in the past in accordance with JRC OI 3000.3 dated 20 July 1961. With a few exceptions, this coordination has worked extremely well over the past years. In the case of operations for which CIA has been responsible the JCS has continuously supplied varied and outstanding support so that very complex operations have been carried out with a high degree of efficiency. In this connection the basic proposal states that the NRO has inadequate operationally experienced personnel. While this may be somewhat true of the NRO staff as such, since in the past the NRO staff has not taken an active part in such aircraft operations, I believe it can be said that both the DOD and CIA overflight programs have demonstrated outstanding competence in operations and the responsible organizations are indeed staffed with personnel of outstanding operational experience. I believe sufficient operationally experienced personnel could be obtained for the small additional NRO staff which might be required in accordance with my proposal.

6. The following two detailed points should also be made in connection with these papers:

a. Paragraph 2h of the basic proposal states that the Deputy for Operations, NRO Staff, will specify desired targets to be covered by satellite missions. This is a function of COMOR-USIB and cannot be carried out by a NRO staff officer.

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b. Paragraph 1 at the top of page 2 states that the Deputy for Operations would prepare a revised plan for the DNRO to forward to the Special Group. I believe that preparation of the plan should be the responsibility of the Director of Program B or perhaps in some minor cases this could be done by the Deputy for Operations with coordination of the final version with the Director of Program B.

Signed Herbert Scoville, Jr.

HERBERT SCOVILLE, JR.
Deputy Director
(Research)

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